

# COMPARATIVE LITERATURE OF NOVEL SURAT KECIL UNTUK TUHAN AND OSCAR AND THE LADY IN PINK

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## ABSTRACT

Comparative study is the way to make comparison of two (possibly more) things. In literature, there are some aspects that could be compared such as the literary work itself. This study discusses about two literary works from different culture and different author. The first one is novel which title *Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan* by Agnes Devauner and the second is short story from Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt which title *Oscar and the Lady in Pink*. The purpose of this study is to compare about the intrinsic elements of both literary works and to compare about the main character there. The method which is used to this study is qualitative research because of the data collected by the word or sentence but not the number. Qualitative data deals with descriptions which could be observed and not measured. The results of this study showed to the reader about the intrinsic elements of both different literary works and also the comparison between the main characters of each literary work. Hopefully this study will give the beneficial to the reader in terms of comparative study.

**Keywords:** *contrast, comparative literature, intrinsic*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays literature became the thing that interesting and appears an improvement of that. Talk about literature itself is the way to increase our knowledge and the way to appreciate the literary work which has created by the author. As we know that there are several kinds in literature such as novel, novella, drama or play and poetry. In this occasion we available to discusses about the comparison between two literary works from English and Indonesia. The first which has title "*Oscar and The Lady in Pink*" by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt and the second is "*Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan*" by Agnes Davonar. It looks like interesting to analyze both of the stories because from that we found something that makes the story could be compared. The main point which is support is the main character from each story.

Oscar and The Lady in Pink itself actually is the novella which uses French language, but fortunately has been translated into English and published in 2002 which consists of 58 pages. The story is the third series in the “*Le Cycle de l’Invisible*” which tells about world religions. That is composed of the letters of Oscar in his rest of life after he met Mammie Rose. The letters have the purpose to fill his loneliness and describe about twelve days before he died caused by leukemia or cancer.

Then about “*Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan*” by Agnes Davonar also tells about the teenager who has cancer and died because of it. The novel which is published in 2008 inspired the producer to create a film version. This story is based on the real story of a girl named Keke. The novel which consists of 232 pages became a bestseller and amused the reader and also the viewer of the film.

Based on both of the stories which are from different places, cultures and languages, it is interesting to compare what happens in both stories by using comparative literature. The analysis would be in the intrinsic elements of the story such as character, theme, plot, setting, place and time, and conflict. Comparative literature itself is the theory or the way to compare literary works which have something to compare such as the story, the culture, politics and economics, character itself or many things. According to the definition of comparative literature given by Bijay Kumar Das is very simple, vivid and understandable:

The simple way to define comparative literature is to say that it is a comparison between two literatures. Comparative literature analyzes the similarities and dissimilarities and parallels between two literatures. It further studies themes, modes, conventions and use of folk tales, myths in two different literatures or even more.

Then the other definition of comparative literature is from Manikar. He has explained the phenomena in different words by saying:

Comparative literature studies can include the application of the usual aesthetic values to a literature, an understanding of the different literary movements and tendencies of an age, studies of themes and ideas that appear in different literatures, and finally the study of genre, of structures and patterns. But perhaps the most important of all are the literary relations.

Comparative literature is a study of relationships between two or more literatures. For example - English literature, American literature, all are written in

English language. The study of comparative literature encompasses all these literatures in its scope.

### **1. Method**

Comparative literature is the main theory used in this study. As explained before that, it is the way to make a comparison and find the similarities or the differences between two literary works. The method of this study is descriptive qualitative research which is collecting the data by the word or sentence in the novel and novella or the other sources which suitable with the meaning. The data which used in this research is from the novella entitled *Oscar and The Lady in Pink* and novel entitled “*Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan.*” The point of this research is to find the similarities and differences between two literary works and analyze the intrinsic element of that.

## **B. DISCUSSION**

*Oscar and The Lady in Pink* by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt have the same theme as *Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan* by Agnes Davonar which is tell about the teenager who struggles for their illness named cancer. It is also tells about how people do interaction with God by a letter in the rest of their life cause of a cancer.

### **1. Oscar and The Lady In Pink by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt**

Oscar as the main character here is a boy ten years old. He has a cancer and the doctor has already said to his parents that his life is only remains for twelve days. His friends calling him with name Bald Egg is because his head is bald. Oscar never knows about God before and thought that God never exist. He only knows about Santa Claus who always gives a gift for children in Christmas day. In his rest of life he is pretending like a normal person and does what as it should be as a man.

Mammie Rose or Granny Rose is a volunteer in the hospital. She is the former of wrestler who became a nurse, especially Oscar’s favorite nurse. Mammie Rose is very interested of Oscar. She is tooks care of Oscar and tells many thing of her

experience to Oscar. She makes Oscar stronger and she also introduces a God to Oscar because Oscar never known about God before.

Oscar parents always busy of their work. It is because they must earn much money for Oscar who lives in hospital. They only visit Oscar in hospital on weekend. They love Oscar much but they could not spent their time for him is because they must work. What can they do only work hard, visit Oscar and give him many toys so that make him entertained with that.

Bacon is one of Oscar's friends who always plays with Oscar and his skin highly burnt so that he called as Bacon. He also suffering of his illness and it is influence of his condition. He spent his time with Oscar in the hospital.

Pop Corn also Oscar's close friend who is morbidly obese, that's way he called as Pop Corn. He also lives in hospital and always with Oscar and others.

Einsten is also Oscar's friend who is hydrocephaly sufferer. He called Einsten is because his head so big. He lives in hospital with Oscar and the others friends.

Peggy Blue is young girl who has blood illness so that makes her skin has blue color. She is a beautiful girl who makes Oscar fall in love with her. Oscar and Peggy Blue became closer and she is pretend as Oscar's wife in Oscar's game.

Sadrine is the supporting character who lives in the hospital too. He is a young girl with illness. Oscar ever asking to his friend who is like with Peggy Blue to choose Sadrine as girlfriend is because Oscar feels jealous when his friend like Peggy.

Dr. Dusseldorf is Oscar's doctor who has responsible of Oscar. He always has bad feeling is because Oscar's operation has already failed. That's way he always looks confused and afraid of Oscar's condition at the time.

## **2. Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan**

Keke is a teenager who is active, intelligent, confident and honest. She has aspiration of herself although his life will not be long again. She still keeps struggles and fight for her life and her rest of life. She never feels give up and make people around her became sad of his condition who is a cancer suffered.

“Satu Lagi kebiasaanku setiap pulang sekolah sambil menunggu ayah selesai bekerja di kantor sekolah. Aku sering ikut ekstrakurikuler volley dengan kakak-kakak kelas dan kedua kakak ku. Selain itu, aku juga suka ikut membantu mereka untuk membuat Mading (Majalah Dinding). Kemudian aku di arahkan oleh kakak kelasku menjadi team kreatif MADING karena kata mereka aku berbakat menggambar dan daya imajinasiku tinggi. Begitu kata mereka.” (p. 11)

Keke’s father or Mr. Jody is a wise person who love and care of his children especially Keke. He always makes his children feel comfortable and full of love. Keke’s father also one of reason for Keke to fight her cancer.

“Aku menolak di gigitan kedua, tetapi ayah dengan setia berada disampingku dan terus memberikan dukungan kepadaku sambil merayuku untuk memakan obat-obat herbal tersebut.

“Ayo, Keke...Dimakan sayang... kan kamu mau sembuh. Kita berangkat umroh sama-sama nanti kalau kamu Sembuh. Nanti di tanah suci kita bersyukur kepada Allah karena kamu di berikan kesehatan. Kamu mau kan sayang...???” Kata Ayah. (p. 61)

Keke’s mother who is the patient person and love Keke much but after she separated with her husband or Mr. Jody makes her and Keke rare to see each other. They also separated like there is a distance between them.

Kiki and Chika are Keke’s family also who care and close with Keke. Kiki likes to make a joke while Chika is a dilligent.

“Kak Kiki tidak percaya begitu saja. Saat aku lengah, dia langsung mencopot kacamata hitamku. Akhirnya semua pun tau. Benar saja dugaanku!! Tawa Kakakku meledak dan ia terlihat senang melihat wajahku. Untungnya ayah Langsung melotot ke arah kakakku dan kak Kiki pun terdiam. Ayah memperhatikan keadaan mataku. Ia sedikit panik melihat aku bisa tertular penyakit mata karena sejak kecil aku terbilang jarang sakit.” (p. 29)

Andi is handsome boy who is kind and patient. He likes play basketball and love Keke. What Andi do makes Keke feels the spirit to face her life and her illness.

“Keke, Andi tau kamu marah terhadap keadaan! Tapi bukanlah menyiksa diri seperti ini bukanlah Keke yang sesungguhnya?! Keke yang sesungguhnya adalah orang yang Andi cintai dan seorang gadis yang tabah. Keke yang Andi cintai adalah putri yang selalu tersenyum dan riang dalam keadaan apapun! “ Ujar Andi. (p. 72)

Pak Iyus is a funny person who is loyal to Keke's family. He is kind, patient and gives big attention to Keke.

"Kamu tenang aja, Ke.... Nggak usah khawatir. Ada ayah, ada kak Chika, ada kak Kiki dan ada Pak Iyus yang nemenin kamu kemana aja. Pokoknya kamu tenang aja.... Mendingan kita lanjutkan makan kita ini, oke?" Ujar pak Iyus sambil mengajak ku bercanda. (p. 113)

Bibi is a good housemaid of Keke's family. She is kind and also patient who care of Keke and her family. She always be responsible of many things in home an serve the family well.

"Aduh ayah.. Maaf, tadi kesiangan sedikit.. " Lalu Bibi memberikan roti kepada ayah untuk diberikan padaku.  
"Ini, makan roti yang sudah disiapkan Bibi!" (p. 14)

Keke's friends are Fadha, Maya, Shifa, Ida, Andhini that loyal and care to Keke. They always make Keke happy and full of love in Keke's rest of life.

"Hal pertama yang kulakukan ketika aku kembali ke bangku sekolahku, yaitu..  
Ku letakkan tanganku dan kusentuh dengan jariku. Rasa lembut meja coklat ini nyaris telah ku lupakan. Fadha dan Sahabat-sahabatku hanya tersenyum padaku sambil berkata...  
"*Welcome back, Keke..!!*" Ujar Mereka.." (p. 99)

Angel is the character whose has bad attitutde. She is arrogant and do bullying to her friends. She does not like Keke and always bother Keke. She never wants somebody like her and she is a selfish person.

Sebelum pertandingan, Angel sempat mendatangi timku.  
"Aduh, kayaknya kalau memang dengan keadaan musuh yang sakit nggak Enak juga ya? Tapi apa boleh buat.. Kita terpaksa harus menang dengan Keadaan kayak gini!" Fadha langsung bangkit. Aku menarik tangannya untuk tidak melayani ejekan Angel. "Oops. Awas ada yang mau nubruk. Sebaiknya simpan aja tenaganya buat ngalahin kita.. Daa... "Ucap Angel sambil meninggalkan kami". (p. 39)

Adi Kusuma is the first doctor who took care of Keke when Keke got the illness in her eye. He is kind and took care of Keke very well.

“Jadi, Keke kenapa dok? Kok sakit mata sampe mimisan gitu?”  
“Hmm.. Sampai sejauh ini sih saya kira Sinus. Tapi belum tau juga kalau belum di ronsen. Sekarang saya tulis resep aja. Kalau bisa sih Keke jangan sekolah dulu selama proses pengobatan..”  
Iya..” Jawabku singkat.  
“Obat ini diminum dulu secara teratur selama 5 hari. Bila tidak ada perubahan, saya akan buat surat pegantar ke dokter THT (Telinga Hidung Tenggorokan)”. Ujar dokter Adi Kusuma. (p. 34-35)

Mr. Mukhlis is a professor who is an expert in cancer disease. He struggles to tooks care of Keke and makes her loss of the cancer.

“Kita coba lakukan hal yang sama, yaitu dengan proseskemoterapi satu seri lagi, dilanjutkan dengan radioterapi dengan di sinar. Jika ini belum berhasil maka akan saya diskusikan dengan teman-teman saya di Universitas Indonesia. Kita berdoa saja, semoga cara ini berhasil.”  
Kalimat pesimis dari Prof. Mukhlis. (p. 115)

### **3. The Similarities And The Differences of Setting**

Oscar and The Lady in Pink by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt takes place in the hospital because in the story shows that all events almost happened in the hospital and the room or area of the hospital. Then about the time happened in the December include in the Christmas day and they were celebrate the Christmas together. The atmosphere of this story is funny, tighten, sadness and happiness.

“They call me Bald Egg, I look only seven years old, I live at the hospital because of my cancer, and I’ve never talked to you before because I don’t even think you exist”. (p.58)

“It’s all done. I’m married. It is the 21<sup>st</sup> of December. I’m heading toward my thirtieth year and I got married” (p.87)

“At ten o’clock I realized that it really was Christmas, that I wouldn’t be able to stay with Peggy because her family-brothers, uncles, nephews, cousins-was going to land in her room and I was going to be obliged to bear up under my parents presence.” (p.101)

Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan by Agnes Davonar takes place in the city of Jakarta. For the exactly in the area of Green Garden-Jakarta toward to street vendors. And then setting of the time is the morning, afternoon and evening time starts from 2003 until 2006. Then the setting of atmosphere that tells in the novel are happiness, sadness and spirit..

“ . . .Ayah pun mangajak kami makan malam diluar sambil menikmati udara malam kota Jakarta, karena hari ini menu makan malam kami tidak

tersedia. Sejenak kami menikmati *sea food* di kaki lima yang enak di kawasan *Green Garden*. Aku senang kami bisa tertawa bersama-sama dan aku berhasil melenyapkan rasa gundah di hati ayah dan kakak-kakak ku.”(p. 111)

#### **4. The Similarities and the Differences of Plot**

Oscar is a boy ten years old who is spent his day to lives in hospital. He is a cancer suffered that makes him looks disappointed of his condition is because of he knows that he will die soon. He has friends in hospital and they are Pop Corn, Bacon, and Einstein. His parents were busy to work so that makes them only visit Oscar on weekend. Oscar feels being ignored by his parent until he met with Mammie Rose. She is a former wrestler who became a volunteers and favorite nurse for Oscar.

Keke is a beautiful girl who is intelligent, she loves to play volley ball. She also has many friends and a happy family despite of her father and mother had separated, but she is happy with what she has in her life.

#### **5. Rising Action**

Oscar heard about the conversation between his parents and the doctor about his operation and transplant which fails. He looks like disappointed and sad. But Mamie Rose tries to accompany him and make him better. Actually Oscar never knows about God. He thought that God never exists. Mammie Rose though and tells him about God and make him believe about God and think that God is exist.

Kiki is one of Keke's family members who suffering of sore eyes, indeed at that time the sore eyes being widely attacked students in Keke's school. Then it is also influence to Keke. Her eyes became red and bigger. It is looks not normally like before. And finally the doctor was said that Keke having a cancer in serious condition.

#### **6. Climax**

Oscar and Mammie Rose became closer and Oscar only trust in her. He tells many things to her and shares everything. Mammie Rose tries to make a game for him who influences his rest of life to be better. This game makes Oscar's

age add ten years in every day. So that he could across his rest of life become the real man as it should be. He is pretend like a normal man in life. He is also pretend as his Peggy's husband by a fake marriage status through the game. Peggy is the girl who has blood illness and lives in one of room in the same hospital with Oscar. In his 40 years old he is pretend like has second puberty like a real men as it should be.

Keke's cancer became so serious and makes people around her feels worried about, but her father keep trying to find the solution of that. After doing the alternative medicine, Keke's condition does not improve. Then Keke's met a good professor named Mr. Mukhlis, she is doing chemotherapy treatment. The chemotherapy is successful, although makes Keke's loss her beautiful hair.

## **7. Falling action**

Oscar feels that he is getting old and tired. He thinks that he has done everything in his lif and feels complete. He feels lucky and happy to have Mammie Rose who helps him to face the rest of life and introduces him to God, so that he feels like God with him anytime. He said thanks to God for coming in his life and makes all be better.

The cancer had disappeared, but the cancer came back and spreading. But Keke's father keeps trying. On the other hand Keke keep struggles of her condition by share the happiness to the people around her. She began to realize that her life would not be much longer. She keeps learned many things in her rest of life.

## **8. Resolution**

Over all Oscar feels that he has done with his life. He is die and feeling in peace. All people feel sad especially Mammie Rose who always with him. No one knows when he die and Oscar face his death by himself. Before he die, he also write the last letter to God and say that he is already a hundred and ten and feels really old and beginning to die. And he had sign as his wrote "only God is allowed to wake me up". That is make Mammie Rose compassion and sad if she is remember about the boy who she loved, Oscar.

After trying so hard with no results, then Keke's father started to give up of Keke's condition which became so weak. Currently Keke admitted to hospital, and she was comma for a long time. After comma, finally she sleep peacefully forever. Her father and others family feels sad and there is nothing to do. When Keke closed her eyes in the last time, the whole of hospital near her room feel shock and sad of Keke's death.

## **9. The Similarities and The Differences of Conflict**

1. Oscar in Oscar and The Lady in Pink story and Keke in Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan has the same illness and that is a cancer. The thing that make different is Oscar has leukemia and Keke has *rhabdomyosarcoma*.
2. Both of the stories tells about the main character who has illness and they write a letter to God.
3. Oscar wrote a letter about his day. He is like write a diary book and announces everything that hapenned in his life to God.
4. Keke only wrote one and only a letter to God before her death comes.
5. Oscar fails in his operation while Keke ever been safe from the operation and continue her life for a while, until the illness came again in her life and make her passes away.
6. Oscar never known about God from his parents before, it is because his parents are atheist. Oscar knows about God from Mammie Rose.
7. While Keke basically knows about God and live in the family whose religious.
8. Oscar lives in hospital with people whose has illness like him, while Keke could spends her time to lives with her family and gather with her friends in the school.
9. Oscar feels being ignored by his parents is because his parents busy to work and only visit him on weekend, while Keke got many attention and affection from her family especially her parents although her parents has separated.

10. Oscar was died after he feels weak in hospital and it is suitable as his doctor said about his condition, while Keke died directly when she was comma in hospital.

### C. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, the result could be conclude that between novella entitle *Oscar and The Lady in Pink* by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt and novel *Surat Kecil Untuk Tuhan* by Agnes Davonar have the similarities and the differences. The similarities and the differences that found in both of the stories include the intrinsic element such as the character, theme, plot, setting time and place and conflict. It could be mentioned that both of the stories have the same idea and theme is because both oh them tell about the teenagers who try to be strong and keep struggle in their rest of life with the same illness (cancer). The main character became the supporting key point in this analysis is because from what they do we know that both of the stories have the similarity and the main idea about the teenager who was wrote a letter to God to ask something, say thanks or even fill their loneliness. From the analysis clearly tells about the event and the similiraty and the differences of both story.

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